

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Project Name:	Stevie Neuman Spring Development, Buried Stock Water Pipeline and Stock Tank Request 2018
Proposed Implementation Date:	December 2018- February 2019
Proponent:	DNRC Grazing Lessee, Stevie Neuman
Location:	T21N R1E Section 9
County:	Cascade

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

The DNRC Grazing Lessee, Stevie Neuman, has submitted a proposal to place an improvement on her Montana State Trust Land grazing lease number 5705 located in Section 9, T21N R1E. The portion of the improvement located on Trust Land would include developing a spring with a collection box, burying approximately 100 feet of plastic pipeline south to a proposed new tank; all of which would be located on State Trust Land. The project would provide a dependable water source to a dry area and would keep cattle out of the flowing spring water and other undeveloped springs and wet areas in the section. Please see attached map.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

Cory Loeker, Department of Fish, Wildlife, & Parks Wildlife Biologist
Patrick Rennie, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation Archaeologist
Montana Natural Heritage Program

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

No other governmental agencies with jurisdiction or additional permit requirements were identified during the scoping for this proposed project. The project as proposed would involve only Montana Trust Land allocated to the Montana Tech.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Alternative A: No action alternative. The proposed project would not be approved.

Alternative B: Action Alternative: Allow the proponent to install a spring collection box, buried pipeline, and the installation of a single stock water tank.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

No fragile, compactable, or unstable soils are present. Construction of the project would entail installing a spring

collection box, burying up to 100 feet of pipeline and installing a stockwater tank. A backhoe would be used to place the pipe, disturbing up to 36" in width. Impacts to the soil would be minimal, due to the small scale of the project on the landscape.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

The location of the proposed spring development is near the head of an unnamed intermittent tributary to Muddy Creek. There are 2 other unnamed tributaries to Muddy Creek in this section, one intermittent and one perennial. The project would improve water availability for livestock and wildlife and improve cattle grazing distribution on this section. This project would have a positive effect on all the tributaries as the cattle would utilize the stockwater tank and stay out of the wetland and riparian areas.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

Air Quality would not be affected by this project.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

Cover, quantity, and quality of vegetative communities would not be significantly affected by this project due to the low amount of disturbance and short construction time frame. The proposed collection box and pipeline would be installed on approximately 100 feet of native rangeland and would be reseeded with a seed mix approved by DNRC.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

The project would increase the availability of water for both livestock and wildlife. The location of the proposed project is located approximately 0.3 mile from the other intermittent tributary and 0.8 mile from the perennial tributary to Muddy Creek. Construction practices used in the placement of the pipeline and stock tank would be a one-time short duration occurrence to limit disturbance and will not lead to negative cumulative effects on wildlife. A wildlife escape ramp would be placed in the tank for birds and small mammals.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

The Montana Natural Resource Information Service (NRIS) was queried for information regarding sensitive or endangered species located in the vicinity of the project area. The query results are listed below:

Long-billed Curlew - (*Numenius americanus*) – Long-billed curlew's are known to nest and summer around the project area, with one point observation 1.3 miles from the proposed project. The project would be completed during the winter months when curlews are not present in the area. Grasses and forbs would not be significantly affected by the proposed project due to the small scale and short construction time. Nesting and summer habitat would not be negatively affected by the proposed project.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

A Class I (literature review) level review was conducted by the DNRC staff archaeologist for the area of potential effect (APE). This entailed inspection of project maps, DNRC's sites/site leads database, land use records, General Land Office Survey Plats, and control cards. The Class I search revealed that no cultural or paleontological resources have been identified in the APE. Because of this, no additional archaeological investigative work will be conducted in response to this proposed development. However, if previously unknown cultural or paleontological materials are identified during project related activities, all work will cease until a professional assessment of such resources can be made.

A field inspection by Heidi Crum was completed on December 3, 2018. No cultural resources were found in the vicinity of the proposed project.

11. AESTHETICS:

Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

The project is located in a rural part of Cascade County, approximately 2 miles west of Interstate 15 and 2.7 miles north of Highway 200. The project would alter aesthetics of the area temporarily during construction and minimally when the project is complete.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:

Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

No demands for additional environmental resources are required for this project. No cumulative effects to environmental resources should result from this project.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:

List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

No other studies, plans, or projects were identified during the scoping for this project.

IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

No health or safety risks are posed by the project.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

If approved, this project is designed to improve access to water to aid in improving livestock distribution and forage utilization.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

The project will not create or eliminate permanent jobs in the area.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

No significant increase in tax revenues are expected as a result of this project.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:

Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services.

No increased demand for government services are expected as a result of this project.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:

List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

No locally adopted environmental plans will be affected by this project.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:

Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

This project will not negatively alter recreational activities in the area. The improved access to upland water sources may increase use of the area by wildlife, enhancing recreational opportunities.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.

No change in population will result from this project.

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

No change in social structures and mores are expected as a result of this project.

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

The action affects water availability in the area. The increased water availability would improve both livestock distribution and wildlife use of the area.

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:

Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

The return to Montana Tech for this project cannot be measured in dollars received. No additional revenue is expected to result from construction of this project as the animal unit months (AUM's) are calculated on a forage production basis. The lessee is expected to harvest that forage and use the AUM's by fencing, placing improvements, and/or herding their livestock. The lessee's spring development, stock water pipeline and tank project would increase the overall value of the lease by creating a dependable water source on the affected section and adjacent Trust Lands.

EA Checklist Prepared By:	Name: Heidi Crum	Date: 12/5/2018
	Title: Land Use Specialist	

V. FINDING**25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED:**

Alternative B: Action Alternative: Allow the proponent to install a spring collection box, buried pipeline, and a single stock water tank.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS:

Installation of the stock water pipeline and stock water tank will help disperse livestock over the lease and help better utilize the available forage. No long term or cumulative impacts are anticipated from the implementation of this proposal.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:☐

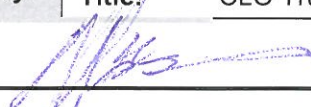
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More Detailed EA

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No Further Analysis

EA Checklist Approved By:	Name: Martin Blaukas
	Title: CLO Trust Land Program Manager
Signature: 	Date: 12/7/18

Blue dot in NE¼SE¼ of Section 9 is the location of the proposed spring development. The unnamed perennial

tributary to Muddy Creek mentioned above flows through N½NW¼ of Section 9.

